

REMARKS

Claims 11, 15, 16 and 20-24 are pending in this application.

By this Amendment, independent claims 11 and 16 are amended. New dependent claims 21-24 are added. Claims 12-14 and 17-19 are canceled. The support to the amendments made to the claims may be found in the specification at, for example, Tables 1, 3 and 4, and paragraphs [0009], [0010], [0013], [0023], [0035] and [0050] - [0053].

The specification is amended to obviate informalities, as the Examiner suggested. No new matter is added.

Applicants thank Examiners Smith and Clemente for the courtesy extended to Applicants' representative, Mr. Luo, during the March 28, 2008 personal interview. The substance of the personal interview is incorporated in the following remarks.

The Office Action objects to the specification. In particular, the Office Action objects to the references to specific claims in paragraphs [0014], [0016], [0018], [0020], [0024], [0026], [0028] and [0030]. The specification is amended, as outlined above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 11-13, 15-18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0109023 to Kudo et al.; and rejects claims 14 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kudo. These rejections are moot with respect to canceled claims 12-14 and 17-19, and are respectfully traversed with respect to remaining claims 11, 15, 16 and 20.

Independent claims 11 and 16 are amended to recite additional features. In particular, claim 11 is amended to recite "a foamed resin having an average particle diameter of 15 to 250 μm and being contained in 25 to 65 volume percents." Claim 16 is amended to recite similar features. As discussed during the personal interview, Kudo does not disclose these features.

Also, Kudo does not even suggest these features. In particular, as discussed during the personal interview, Kudo does not recognize the criticality of the diameter range and the volume percentage range recited in claims 11 and 16, as amended. For example, Table 1 of the present application describes materials A-I. Among these materials, materials A-E (corresponding to examples 1-5 in Table 3) satisfy the recited diameter range (see col. 2 of Table 1) and the volume percentage (see col. 4 of Table 1) recited in claims 11 and 16. These materials produce desirable bonding strength, as shown in col. 4 of Table 3, between 2.9 - 3.7 MPa.

In contrast, materials F-I do not satisfy the ranges recited in claims 11 and 16. For example, materials F and G do not have the required diameter (see col. 2 of Table 1). Materials H and I do not satisfy the required volume percentage (see col. 4 of Table 1). As a result, materials F-I (corresponding to examples 6-9 in Table 3) only have a bonding strength no more than 1.2 MPa (see col. 4 of Table 3).

As discussed above, the ranges recited in claims 11 and 16 are critical to the desirable bonding strength. Kudo does not recognize such criticality. Thus, Kudo does not even suggest the subject matter recited in claims 11 and 16.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 11 and 16, and claims 15 and 20 depending therefrom, under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and §103(a) is respectfully requested.

New dependent claims 21-24 are believed to be patentable at least for the patentability of claims 11 and 16, from which they respectively depend, as well as for additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 11, 15, 16 and 20-24 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Gang Luo
Registration No. 50,559

JAO:GL/wkb

Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: April 11, 2008

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

| |
|--|
| <p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p> |
|--|